

who were honored to know him. While we will miss him in this life, we know that his residence today is far better than ours is here. And we will be satisfied in that knowledge until we meet again.

HONORING BISHOP ROBERT J. CARLSON

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bishop Robert J. Carlson, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw, as he celebrates the 25th anniversary of his Episcopal Ordination. The Diocese is celebrating this event in honor of Bishop Carlson at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Bay City, Michigan, on January 11.

Bishop Carlson is a native of Minneapolis. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 23, 1970, for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy and his Master of Divinity degree from Saint Paul Seminary. He continued his studies at Catholic University of America, receiving his Licentiate in Canon Law in 1979.

On January 11, 1984, Bishop Carlson was ordained as an auxiliary bishop for his home archdiocese. In 1994 he was appointed the Bishop of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He served at this post until Pope John Paul II directed he become the Bishop of the Diocese of Saginaw. He was installed as the fifth Bishop of the Saginaw Diocese on February 24, 2005.

Currently Bishop Carlson serves as co-chair of the Mission Advisory Committee of the Institute for Priestly Formation, as a member of the Canon Law Society of America, a member of the Board of the International Dominican Foundation, as a member of Board of Sacred Heart Seminary, a member of the Board of Los Cabos Children's Foundation, a member of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors. In 2004 he founded the Messengers of Peace Religious Community in Colombia.

Bishop Carlson's pastoral letters, speeches and publications reflect his commitment to the Catholic Church, priestly formation, the sanctity of human life, and evangelizing. He has written on the Sacraments and the role of Bishops in the Church.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me and applaud the work of Bishop Robert J. Carlson. His motto is, "Before the Cross there is no Defense," and expresses his deep faith in Our Lord, Jesus Christ. The cross on his coat of arms represents his commitment and mission to the faithful entrusted to his custody. Bishop Carlson has devoted his life to the care and nurturing of people of the Catholic Church and all humanity. The best testament to his life's achievement is the love, respect and spiritual growth they reflect back to him.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIS "SNAKE" MURRAY

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the life and legacy of the late Willis "Snake" Murray, an outstanding Floridian who is one of the most unsung leaders of our Miami-Dade County community and Florida.

A native of Miami, Mr. Murray was born to Willis and Mazie Murray on October 9, 1923, in Sanford, Florida. One of the distinguished members of Booker T. Washington's Class of 1943, he went on to obtain his bachelor's and master's degree from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, and attended post-graduate studies at Barry University and University of Miami.

An avid football fan, Mr. Murray especially enjoyed attending Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University and Miami Dolphins football games throughout football season.

Mr. Murray was a volunteer for the Alliance for Aging advocating for seniors, the American Cancer Society and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Youth and Elderly Against Crimes Task Force. He was also a strong advocate for seniors. Each year he participated in the American Cancer Society Relay For Life, which raises money for cancer research and programs.

Mr. Murray was a staunch believer who abided by the dictum that those who have less in life, through no fault of their own, should be helped by the government, regardless of their race, creed, age, or gender. As a community activist, Mr. Murray had a penchant for being at the forefront of African-American and other minority struggles in their quest for justice and equality. The unabashed and exemplary service demonstrated by Mr. Murray was evident in his desire for youth academic excellence and political empowerment for disenfranchised Americans. His commendable political activism has motivated countless others from all political and philosophical persuasions throughout Florida to follow his example of unrelenting defense of the "forgotten man." Moreover, his charitable actions toward others served as the quintessential embodiment of the Judeo-Christian faith.

Throughout Mr. Murray's commitment as a community activist, he remained devoted to his family. He will be missed by all who knew him. I offer my heartfelt condolences to his family—his brother, James Murray; daughters, Barbara Walker and Karlar Arthur; and four grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing Mr. Murray's contributions to South Florida. Mr. Willis "Snake" Murray's life was a triumph. He was blessed with a loving family who took pleasure in every aspect of his life and his interests. He will be remembered as a true pioneer and community activist.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDIKIDS HEALTH INSURANCE ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the MediKids Health Insurance Act of 2009, legislation to provide universal health coverage to our Nation's children.

During the campaign, President-elect Obama spoke of the need to mandate coverage to ensure that every child receives needed health care services. MediKids is the simplest, most effective means of achieving that goal. While it is critical that any reform proposal meet the special needs of children, I want to be clear that I am not suggesting we start with children or stop with children. I am looking forward to working with the new Administration and Congressional colleagues on a health reform effort for which the goal is assuring comprehensive care for everyone. I am open to other proposals and believe that we have to look across the board at various options. However, I submit that MediKids contains many elements that could be useful in the upcoming debate.

Nearly 9 million children in this country still lack health insurance coverage. The majority of these children live in families with at least one full-time worker. Often, their families are not offered coverage by their employers at all or they cannot afford the premiums. These simple, but sobering, statistics speak to the need for change. Our system is fundamentally broken when a working parent cannot get health coverage for his or her children.

Rather than reinvent the wheel, I think we should build on what works. When Congress created Medicare more than 40 years ago, our Nation's seniors were more likely to be living in poverty than any other age group. Many senior citizens were unable to afford needed medical services and unable to find health insurance in the private market, even if they had the resources. Today, as a result of Medicare's success, seniors are much less likely to be shackled by the bonds of poverty or to go without needed health care.

Sadly, children are now the group who are most likely to be living in poverty. Kids in America are nearly twice as vulnerable to poverty as adults. This travesty is morally reprehensible, and it has grave consequences for the future of our country. Our future rests on our ability to provide our children with the basic conditions to thrive and become healthy, educated, and successful adults. Poor children are often malnourished and have difficulty succeeding in school. Untreated illnesses only worsen their chance to become productive members of our economy. Healthy children are the key to our economic future.

The MediKids Health Insurance Act would create a new Federal health insurance program for children. Modeled after Medicare, MediKids would provide comprehensive benefits appropriate to children, simplified cost-sharing, prescription drug coverage and mental health parity.

Every child in America would be automatically enrolled in MediKids at birth and maintain that eligibility through age 23. The cost, adjusted for income, would be applied to the family's annual tax bill, unless they opted for

other coverage and showed proof of that coverage. As such, parents would retain the choice to enroll eligible kids in private plans or other Government programs such as Medicaid or SCHIP. However, if a lapse in the other insurance coverage occurred, MediKids would automatically fill in the gap.

MediKids doesn't have complicated enrollment and eligibility hoops. Instead, it assures that families will always have access to affordable health insurance for their children, and it ensures that all children get a truly healthy start in life.

MediKids was originally written in close collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics. They have endorsed MediKids as the best way to provide health coverage to all our children. The bill has also been endorsed by the Children's Defense Fund, Families USA, the National Association of Children's Hospitals, and other organizations advocating for better health care for America's children. As we work on health care reform, we need to pay particular attention to the unique needs of our Nation's children. MediKids is a model that accomplishes that goal.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE ACCESS TO REHABILITATION ACT OF 2009

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Act of 2009 with Representatives ROY BLUNT and MIKE ROSS. This important bill repeals the monetary caps that limit beneficiary access to medically necessary outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology services. Senators JOHN ENSIGN and BLANCHE LINCOLN are introducing this legislation in the Senate.

To remove all uncertainty for Medicare beneficiaries about being able to receive the appropriate therapy, the bipartisan Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Act of 2009 creates a stable payment environment so that health professionals can focus on providing quality health care. Rehabilitation services provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech language pathologists are essential to assisting individuals reach their highest functional level possible and the monetary caps are inconsistent with this objective.

A March 2008 Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) study provided evidence that enforcement of the monetary caps could cause Medicare beneficiaries harm since it may require them to delay necessary medical care, force others to assume higher out-of-pocket costs, and disrupt the continuum of care for many seniors and individuals with disabilities. Specifically, the study provided data that the sickest patients who suffered from Parkinson's disease or who have multiple medical problems were most likely to exceed the monetary caps.

Since inclusion of the caps in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, both Democratic and Republican Congresses and administrations have interceded to prevent their implementation and enforcement citing the negative impact the caps would have on elderly patients' access to

necessary services. Most recently, Congress extended through 2009 the existing medical exceptions process that gives the Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to allow patients to exceed the monetary caps if deemed medically necessary.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to continue ensuring that Americans have access to the highest quality physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language pathology services by supporting this legislation.

HONORING SUPERVISOR ED ROBEY OF LAKE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Supervisor Ed Robey on the occasion of his retirement from the Lake County Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Robey has served the citizens of Lake County honorably for 28 years, the last 12 as a County Supervisor.

Supervisor Robey has had an illustrious career in public service. Since he was first elected to the Clearlake City Council in 1980, Supervisor Robey has consistently gone the extra mile for his constituents. The list of boards and commissions he has served on during his career is overwhelming. It includes LAFCO, the Area Planning Council, the Regional Council of Rural Counties, the California State Association of Counties, the Committee working with the Yolo County Flood Control District in regard to Clear Lake water rights issues, the Proposition 10/First Five Commission, the PEG Board of Directors, North Coast Emergency Medical Services, the Lake County Community Action Agency Board of Directors, the Area Agency on Aging Board of Directors, the North Coast Opportunities Board of Directors, the Caltrans DEAL Committee, and the County Reclassification Committee, among many others.

Supervisor Robey will be remembered for his great sense of humor and superior accessibility to his constituents. His legislative and community accomplishments are much too numerous to be noted here; however, the true test of any elected official is if his constituents are better off when he retires than when he first took office. This is unquestionably the case for Supervisor Robey. The citizens of Lake County owe him a great debt.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Supervisor Ed Robey for his years of dedication and service on behalf of Lake County and beyond. He has been a model of dignified and effective public service. I join his wife Beth, his son and two stepchildren in thanking Ed and wishing him a lifetime of fulfillment.

PROTECTING IMPACT AID FOR NORTH SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to ensure the federal govern-

ment fulfills an important obligation to the families of service men and women in my district. In 1950, President Harry Truman established the Impact Aid program to assist school districts and communities that lose their property tax base because of the presence of the federal government. Without this federal money, the burden would fall to the remaining residents whose property taxes would continue to rise while impacting the quality of education which can be provided. The Impact Aid program helps to alleviate this problem by directly reimbursing public school districts for the loss of traditional revenue sources.

For years Impact Aid was fully funded and offered some of the strongest direct assistance to military families across the Nation. Unfortunately, over the last decade we have fallen behind on this commitment, and it is time to reverse this trend.

While I support fully funding the Impact Aid program, I believe the situation in my district warrants special attention. In order to ensure that our students most in need continue to receive necessary resources, I have introduced this bill to help North Chicago to continue to qualify for heavily impacted payments, and Glenview and Highland Park receive fair compensation.

Due to a unique housing situation for the Great Lakes Naval Training Facility, Impact Aid funding should be higher in five of my school districts. This Naval base is located in North Chicago, one of the poorest school districts in my state. However, some service members and their families live in Navy housing obtained when Ft. Sheridan and Naval Air Station Glenview, located in other suburbs, were closed in the 1990's. These former bases are located within the boundaries of other school districts that now must bear the economic cost of educating children from a base, but receive none of the economic benefits a base provides. Thus, it is vitally important that we both ensure North Chicago continues to receive heavily impacted payments for the benefit of students living there, and that the surrounding communities are more fairly compensated for their loss of property taxes.

By passing this bill, the federal government will be fulfilling its responsibility to these communities, and giving our military families the support they deserve.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise to re-introduce legislation that will amend the United States Constitution to force Congress to rein in spending by balancing the federal budget.

It is common sense to American families that they cannot spend more than they have—yet far too frequently, this fundamental principle has been lost on a Congress that is too busy spending to pay attention to the bottom line.

Our federal government must be lean, efficient and responsible with the dollars that our Nation's citizens worked so hard to earn. We